

of the Christian church was very simple in the beginning, being confined principally to the facts of Gospel history and the more important principles of Christian faith. But during the second and third centuries it was made more elaborate and was reduced to systematic instruction.

A little later the great Augustine, learned in literature, rhetoric, and philosophy drew around him in his own house the more promising young men and gave them such training that it became customary to choose from their number candidates for the offices of the church in Africa.

When the Christian church came into prominence in the world, it did not find the world without great seats of learning but met with great universities, great schools of thought as in Athens and North Africa, universities made venerable thru four centuries of existence. But they had served their day, and the world needed a new wisdom. To remodel the world's wisdom in the face of opposition from the great Roman Empire by a few citizens of a despised province required a heroism that is literally unknown in the world to day. Places for the new schools were considered and decided upon. Their world was divided into four school districts—Antioch in the east, Asia Minor westward, and the two schools of Carthage and Alexandria in North Africa. Thru the untiring zeal and energy of the representatives of these schools Christian students were gathered from far and wide.

What became of the old universities? Their work was done, they lost their hold upon mankind, they died, and the new ones developed. But not without a struggle, for the blood of ten persecutions enriched their growth. The great leaders of these great schools were not perfect men, but they were men equal to the emergency, as firm as the eternal rock when the executioner came into their presence. Brave as the bravest, they did not flinch. They might be sent into exile for their teaching, but returning find their persecutors no longer living, giving them another opportunity to take up the great work of their lives and to show that the beatitudes of Christ may indeed possess flesh and blood.

While the Christian church thus early in its history founded its own schools, yet it did not despise and reject the good found in instruction in secular knowledge and in pagan culture. Christians sent their children to the pagan schools having them complete the entire course of Roman instruction. The literature of the early church Fathers shows their familiarity with pagan culture, and shows the enlarged mind and uncorrupted hearts of those possessed of the mind of Christ coming in contact with the masters of Greece and Rome. Dr. Hurst tells us that on the benches of the school which Marcus Aurelius founded at Athens, the great church leaders—Diodorus of Tarsus, Gregory Nazianzen, and St. Basil sat side by side with Julian, the later Emperor, and with the

most ambitious youths of paganism.

To these who are wary about the moral influence of the modern college upon the student's lives, the words of Gregory Nazianzen telling of his own school life in Athens fifteen hundred years ago may bring encouragement. He says, "Hurtful as Athens was to those in spiritual things—and this is of no slight consequence to the pious, for the city is richer in these evil riches—idols, than the rest of Greece, and it is hard to avoid being carried along with their devotees and adherents—yet we, our minds being closed up and fortified against these things, suffered no injury. On the contrary, strange as it may seem, we were thus the more confirmed in the faith by our perception of their trickery and unreality, which led us to despise these divinities in the very home of their worship. And if there is, or is believed to be, a river flowing with fresh water thru the sea, or an animal which can dance in fire, the consumer of all things such were we among our comrades."

Cardinal Newman tells us that in the early ages the church allowed her children to attend the heathen schools for the acquisition of secular accomplishments, where evils existed, at least as great as attend a mixed education now. The gravest Fathers recommended for Christian youth pagan masters; and the most saintly bishops had been sent in their adolescence by Christian parents to pagan lecture-halls. And for five hundred years all the most prominent of the Christian Fathers received their intellectual training in pagan schools, or in schools which followed the traditions of pagan culture.

Thus for a few centuries the church owed much to the educational institutions of the world, but soon the tables were turned, and the beginning of the mediaeval period marks the second birth of Christian education. Civilization was taking hold of new territories. National boundary lines were being reformed or altered. The unconverted and unchristianized tribes of Central and Northern Europe reached far into the East and westward to the Strait of Gibraltar. How were their languages to be classified? How were the tangled threads of their history to be unraveled? Would the pagan scholars of Athens or Alexandria undertake this great work? No, it became the duty of the church and we may say: "Well was it done." Charlemagne—one of the three great rulers of the world, a Christian, in name at least, saw the necessity and civilizing effect of Christian education. Consequently he invited Alcuin a master of the celebrated school of York, England, to assume the leadership of that school which he had founded in his palace, and which became the fertile germ of the mediaeval university, and to which such great men as Leidrade, Angilbert, Eginhard, Agobard, Paschius, Scotus Erigena, Hincmar and others were connected, either as teachers or pupils. All these were Christian theologians, but their greatness did not depend upon their theology,

It was rather their broadness of culture. They were masters of grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, classical literature, canon law, etc. They were poets, philosophers, statesmen, practical administrators, in fact just such men as Charlemagne wanted. He carried the university around with him. When there was no fighting to be done there was an immense amount of learning in the school of the palace.

The old universities were dying as the old civilization died. New schools followed under the auspices of the church. There came into being the University of Paris, and the schools of Padua and Ferrara, and by and by the great school of Prague. The aspiration of the church for great schools was a controlling passion of the mediaeval period. The Germans caught the fire and universities sprang up; among them Wittenberg, where Melancthon and Luther together shared the throne of universal Christian empire. The educational fever crossed the channel and soon Oxford came into being. To these universities young men flocked from all the countries of western Europe. The story that thirty thousand students studied at one time at Oxford may be a fabrication, but it shows the estimation in which such schools were held. We take great pride in our public school system, and it would be well for us to remember that the public school is a creature of the church. It was thru the direct effort of Luther that public schools were introduced into Germany, and the German gymnasium of today owes its real origin to the period of the reformation. Crossing the ocean to our own country we find that the educational spirit of the first American colonists was intense. They were not seekers after wealth, but the Pilgrim Fathers sought liberty—liberty of conscience, liberty of thought. They valued education, and who can measure the influence that little Mayflower company had upon the future and the education of America? The birth of Harvard, the first American college, under such circumstances marks the feeling of its founders. No class of men contributed so much to the intellectual growth of New England as the ministers of religion. All were educated men, and some of them were distinguished by immense learning. The origin of Yale college is due to ten such clergymen who met and each donated a few books for the founding of a college. In those early days the subjects dealt with in the colleges were mainly theological. Thus all the early schools began with theology. Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Princeton, and Amherst were largely church schools at the outset. Every where it was the love of the church for learning.

And now, while the great State universities are pushing to the front rank in science, it must be remembered that the smaller church colleges are conservators of the classics. In them literature and oratory are as much honored as they are put below the sciences in the State universities. And Mr. W. A. Curtis, himself a State university